

From: Robert Reid [<mailto:rbrtreid@pacbell.net>]
Sent: Saturday, December 15, 2007 1:47 PM
To: MLPAComments
Subject: Coast marine life regulations.

I was a resident of the Mendocino Coast from 1969 until, for health reasons, it was necessary to leave this beautiful area in 1999. My late wife and I lived in the Signal Port area and I was a practicing dentist in Gualala until 1985.

One of the major reason for living on the coast was that I thoroughly enjoyed the recreation of fishing and enjoying the sport of getting abalone. I never abused this privilege and did all in my power to protect the environment.

It is now my understanding that the coast is to become a marine life refuge and that no marine life will be able to be taken for recreation. What a huge mistake this will be. People that have done this for literally generations will now be prevented from doing this with their families.

I am fully aware that there have been abuses of the marine life by poachers and those that have no regard for the environment, but enforcement of laws on the books could prevent this. There were times when I lived there that it was possible for commercial fishermen to strip the coast of rock fish by the use of long line fishing and in that our home was just above the coast, I have watched them string out hundreds of feet of line right on the coast at high tide and eliminate tons of fish that formerly were only taken by recreational fishermen, one at a time while sitting on the rocks with a pole in hand. I have also watched the sea urchin fishermen harvest tons of these and then watched their boats go to a mother boat and unload their catch. I have talked to many divers that have found piles of abalone shells where these sea urchin divers had stripped the rocks of abalone only to get them to the mother boats to take to markets.

The reason for a dwindling amount of sea life in these areas is not the fault of the recreational fisherman, but the State of California allowing this commercial abuse of the fishery. If the Department of Fish and Game had had boats to inspect these boats and the mother boats, or preferably, to not allow their ability to use the long lines and the sea urchin fishing, this would not ever have become an issue.

I also am very much aware of the abuse by the poachers as I have seen people carrying bags of abalone far in excess of the limits. Adequate numbers of wardens could have prevented much of this abuse. I realize that efforts have been made to reduce this abuse, and the reduction of limit size will help, as would making the seasons shorter, but to eliminate the recreational use of the coast is just a disgrace.

The elimination of recreational use of the coastline will have a serious effect on the economy of the area as many people who spend a few days every year in the area for recreational use of their coast will no longer have reason to use the hotels, restaurants, and stores as they have done for much of their lives.

I sincerely hope that the making the coast a continuous refuge area will not be done.

Sincerely,

ROBERT S. REID, DDS
6259 Meadowstone Drive
Santa Rosa, CA. 95409
(707) 538 5789